

The Dignity For All Students Act

“An Agent for School Climate Change”

OCM BOCES

&

New York State Center for School Safety

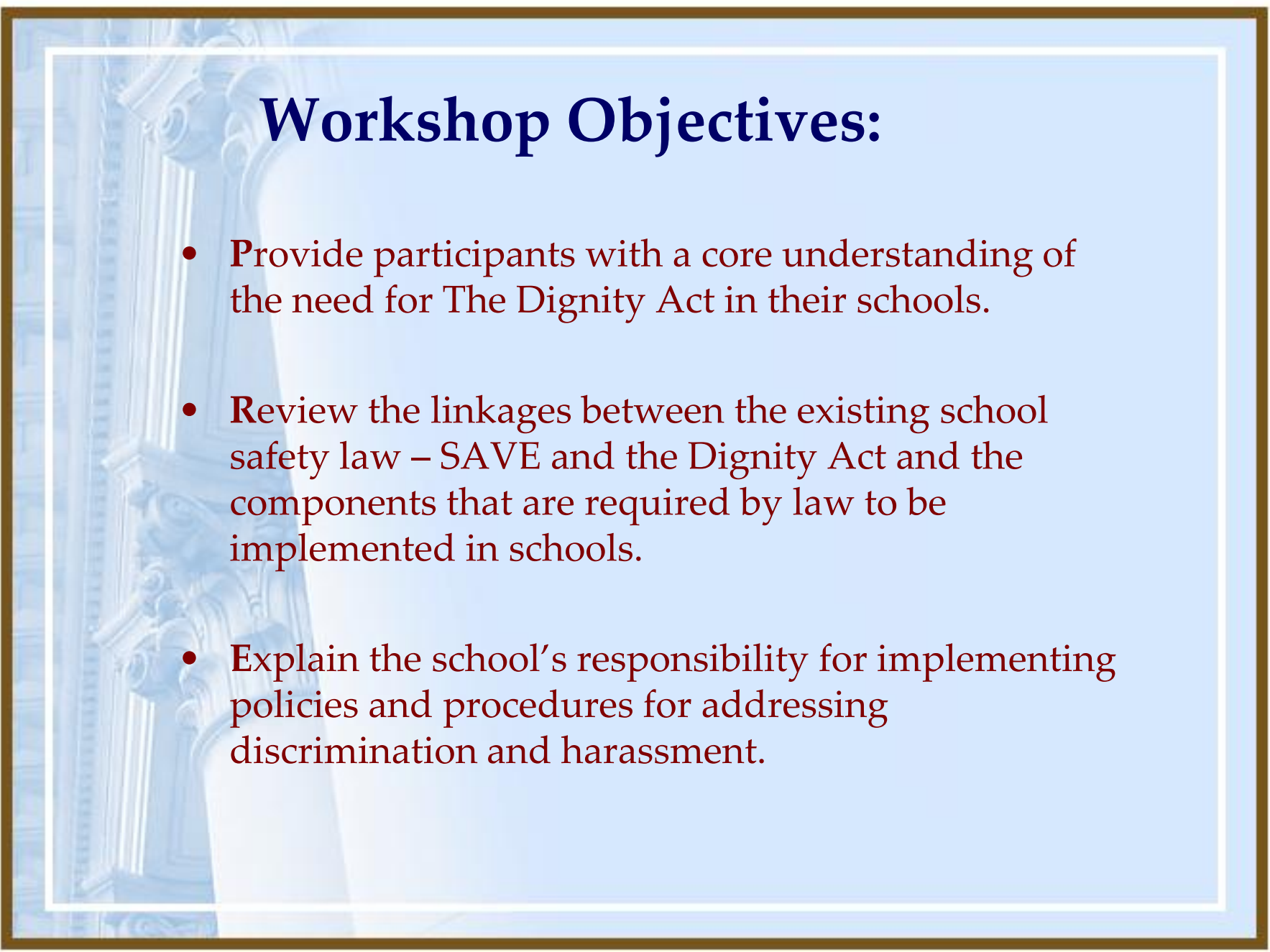
May 21st, 2012



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Welcome and Introductions

- It's an experience!
- Why are you here?
- Workshop objectives and topics
- Resources to support you in this adventure

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Workshop Objectives:

- Provide participants with a core understanding of the need for The Dignity Act in their schools.
- Review the linkages between the existing school safety law – SAVE and the Dignity Act and the components that are required by law to be implemented in schools.
- Explain the school's responsibility for implementing policies and procedures for addressing discrimination and harassment.

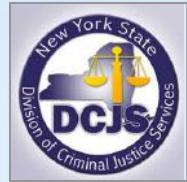
Workshop Objectives:

- **Raise awareness of and sensitivity to incidents of discrimination and harassment.**
- **Increase awareness of the different groups in the school and community.**
- **Explore the strengths and challenges of one's current work place climate and culture.**
- **Identify methods of preventing and responding to incidents.**
- **Recognize the importance of student voice in problem solving and creating solutions.**
- **Receive information and materials for implementing the Dignity Act approved requirements.**

Dignity Act Basics

- Signed into law Sept 13, 2010 - takes effect July 1, 2012
- Addresses issues related to harassment and discrimination in schools – including amendments to Codes of Conduct
- Amended State Education Law by creating a new Article 2 – Dignity for All Students Act
- Amended Section 801[a] of State Education Law regarding instruction in civility, citizenship, and character education by expanding the concepts of tolerance, respect for others, and dignity (does not apply to charter schools)

Dignity Act Task Force



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Dignity Act Task Force Work Groups

- **State Policy & Implementation**
Co-Chairs: NYSED & NYCLU
- **Local Policy & Implementation**
Co-Chairs: NYSED & GLSEN
- **Professional Development**
Co-Chairs: NYSCSS (for NYSED) & ADL
- **Curriculum & Instructional Design**
Co-Chairs: NYSED & NYSUT
- **Outreach**
Co-Chairs: NYSED & Empire Pride Agenda



**No student shall be
subjected to
harassment,
discrimination, or
bullying by employees
or students**



Key Regulatory Accomplishments

- **Amendments:**

- **8 NYCRR 100.2(l)** **Code of Conduct**
- **8 NYCRR 100.2(c)** **Instruction in Civility,
Citizenship, and Character
Education**

- **Proposed NEW Regulations:**

- **100.2(jj)** **School Employee Training**
- **100.2(kk)** **Dignity Act Reporting
Regulation**

Current State-Level Activities

NEW DRAFT Regulation **8 NYCRR 100.2 (jj):** **School Employee Training**

NOTE: Closing date for public comment
is May 25, 2012



Check the NYS Register to comment on the **DRAFT**
regulatory amendment at:

www.dos.ny.gov/info/register.htm

DRAFT

Current State-Level Activities

- Training may be implemented and conducted in conjunction with existing professional development training pursuant to 100.2(dd)(2)(ii) and/or with other training for instructional and non-instructional staff.
- Implement school employee training programs to promote a positive school environment free from discrimination and harassment and to discourage and respond to incidents of discrimination and/or harassment on school property or at a school function.

DRAFT

Current State-Level Activities

- Training to raise awareness and understanding of the Code of Conduct
- Raise awareness and sensitivity to potential acts of discrimination or harassment directed at students by students or staff on school property or at school functions; including, but not limited to, incidents based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex
- Enable staff to prevent and respond to incidents of harassment and discrimination

DRAFT

Current State-Level Activities School Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC)

- At least one employee in every school shall be designated as a DAC and thoroughly trained in methods to respond to human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex
- Each DAC shall be approved by the board of education – and their name and contact information shared with staff, students, and persons in parental relation – via posting on the Internet, signs, etc.

Current State-Level Activities

- **NEW DRAFT Regulation**
8 NYCRR 100.2 (kk):
Dignity Act Reporting



NOTE: Closing date for public comment is May 29, 2012

Check the NYS Register to comment on the **DRAFT**
regulatory amendment at:

www.dos.ny.gov/info/register.htm

DRAFT Current State-Level Activities

Material Incident of Discrimination & Harassment:

Means a single incident or a series of related incidents where a student is subjected to discrimination and/or harassment by a student and/or employee on school property or at a school function that creates a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical contact and/or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse, of such a severe or pervasive nature that:

- a) Has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or mental, emotional and/or physical well-being; or
- b) Reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for her or her physical safety.

DRAFT Current State-Level Activities

Material Incident of Discrimination & Harassment:

Such conduct shall include, but not be limited to, threats, intimidation, or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived *race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex...*



DRAFT

Current State-Level Activities

- **Annual reporting by school districts, BOCES, and charter schools**
Start 2012-13 school year
- **Reporting in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner**

Making the Case for the Dignity Act

A Closer Look: What Makes a Group?



Activity adapted from Anti-Defamation League, Master Training Manual,
Training & Curriculum Department, 2005

Things to Think About



- Which categories were easy to find your group? Which were difficult?
- What methods did you use to determine which groups you belonged?
- Were there categories where you found yourself a member of a very large group or group of one? In what ways did your feelings about these experiences differ?
- Based on your experience in this activity, what do you think makes a group?
- Are some group memberships more important to people than others? Why do you think this might be true?
- How does this exercise connect to your experience of different social groups or cliques that attend your school?



Visioning: Real and Ideal School

- The “Real School” as it is NOW:
 - What is happening in your school in terms of harassment and hate related activities?
 - What do you see as the current state of harassment and bullying prevention/intervention in your school?
 - Who are the key stakeholders involved in prevention/intervention?

Visioning: Real and Ideal School

- The “Ideal School” as you would LIKE to see it:
 - Creating a culture of “upstander” behavior
 - Respect for all
 - Effective systems of reporting and response
 - Plans for all in the system: bus drivers, aides, cafeteria workers, teachers, administrators, parents, students
 - Where are the kids? Engaging youth in what is done

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Visioning: Real and Ideal School

- The “**Ideal School**” continued:
 - Linking with the Common Core State Standards and lesson plans in Language Arts and Social Studies specifically
 - Where are you? What is your role in this?

Activity: What do you control? Moving to the “ideal” with what you can impact.

Deconstructing the Myths: Sensitization on Issues of Diversity

- The 11 named protected classes:
 - Race
 - Color
 - Weight
 - National origin
 - Ethnic group
 - Religion
 - Religious practice

The named protected classes *(continued)*:

- **Disability**
- **Sexual orientation**
- Gender identity
- Sex

Activity: Rooting out Termites

(adapted from Teaching Tolerance, Marcos Torres, <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/rooting-out-termites>)



The Termites: Small but Powerful



Termites: Creating a Mountain



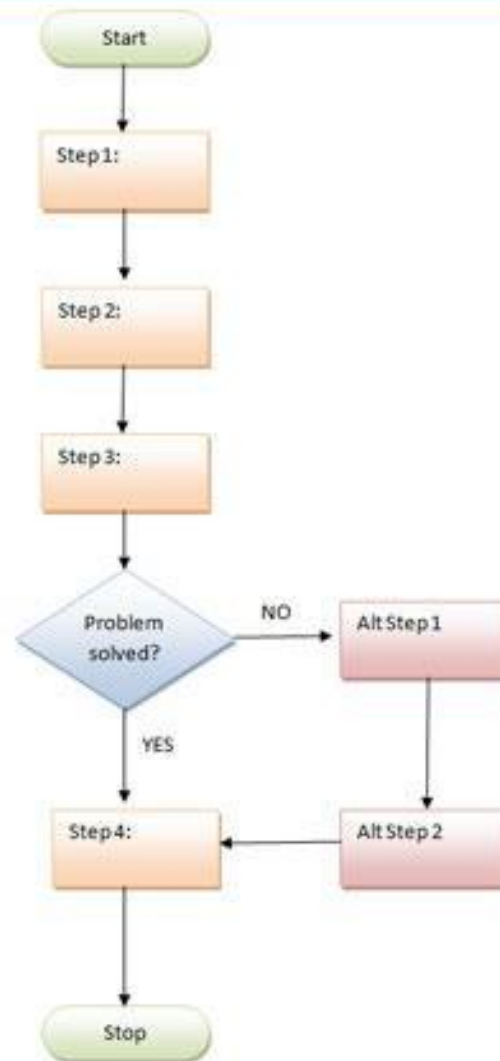
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Discussion of Adult Role

- What is your role to address these kinds of hurts?
- What are non-discriminatory counseling methods?
- What can we do to change our environment?

Our Role... Our Procedure....

- What is our plan when a student reports an incident of harassment or discrimination?
- How do we keep track of these incidents?
- What is our threshold for meting out consequences to offenders?
- How do we support the victim?



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More on Procedures...

- **As you address the behavior is there also a flow chart that indicates how we work with the student in need of support?**
- **Where are the safe places for students in our building?**
- **Who can a student talk to if they have a concern or problem?**

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More on Procedures.....

- If we only have one guidance counselor and they are not available what can the student do?
- Is there someone else to go to? Maybe you have a teacher at each grade level that is a go to person for students. Maybe your school has a Check and Connect program.

Setting the Stage

- Positive school climate
 - What is it?
 - What is critical?
 - What are we already doing?
 - Where are our gaps?
- Creating a prosocial environment where students feel safe and are ready to learn

Activity: What does a Prosocial School Environment look like?

RESOURCES

Systemic Thinking At All Times....

- NYSED's The Dignity For All Students Act Website
- Respect: Interpersonal Violence Prevention Materials
- Please Stand Up!
- Social & Emotional Development & Learning (SEDL) Guidelines
- School Climate Resources from National School Climate Center

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RESOURCES

- Fact Sheets, New York State Center for School Safety
- Task Force Groups
- School Climate Resources from National School Climate Center

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Goal of The Dignity Act:

To provide a school environment free of discrimination and harassment.....

- Systems in place to support implementation
- Consider all other aspects of the school environment and school culture
- Alignment with SAVE and school improvement
- Documentation

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ACTION PLANNING

- What are the gaps between your vision of the 'Real' and 'Ideal' drawings?
- How can you create a plan to respond to the requirements of the Dignity Act?
- How can this data support future planning?
- One planning model: Getting to Outcomes

Getting to Outcomes (GTO) The 10 Steps

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graph TD; 1((1 Choose which problem(s) to focus on.)) --> 2((2 Identify goals, target population, and desired outcomes.)); 2 --> 3((3 Find existing programs and best practices worth focusing on.)); 3 --> 4((4 Modify the program or best practices to fit your needs.)); 4 --> 5((5 Assess capacity (staff, financing, etc.) to implement the program.)); 5 --> 6((6 Make a plan for getting started: who, what, when, where, and how.)); 6 --> 7((7 Evaluate planning and implementation. How did it go?)); 7 --> 8((8 Evaluate program's success in achieving desired results.)); 8 --> 9((9 Make a plan for Continuous Quality Improvement.)); 9 --> 10((10 Consider how to keep the program going if it is successful.)); 10 --> 1; 10 --> 3;
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The diagram illustrates the 10 steps of Getting to Outcomes (GTO), organized into two main phases:

- Steps 1-6: PLANNING**
- Steps 7-10: EVALUATING AND IMPROVING**

The steps are as follows:

- Choose which problem(s) to focus on.
- Identify goals, target population, and desired outcomes.
- Find existing programs and best practices worth focusing on.
- Modify the program or best practices to fit your needs.
- Assess capacity (staff, financing, etc.) to implement the program.
- Make a plan for getting started: who, what, when, where, and how.
- Evaluate planning and implementation. How did it go?
- Evaluate program's success in achieving desired results.
- Make a plan for Continuous Quality Improvement.
- Consider how to keep the program going if it is successful.

Adapted from Getting to Outcomes: 10 Steps for Achieving Result-Based Accountability.
http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/2007/RAND_TR101.2.pdf

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ACTION PLANNING

- Your responsibilities in relation to the two regulatory areas
- Importance of Action Planning
- From Action Planning Form, identify four areas to do immediately when returning to your school

For more information contact:

Dignity for All Students Act

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/>

(518) 486-6090

**The New York State Center for School
Safety www.nyscenterforschoolsafety.org**

(845) 255-8989